

B R O B D I N G N A G

Brobdingnag #53 1966AQ (F¹o4) 1966AV (F¹o4) 18 February 1967

Game 1966AQ

Fall 1904

FRANCO-RUSSIAN ADVANCE SQUEEZES BRITISH FORCES
TURKISH NAVAL ADVANCE ITALIAN OFFERS TO RUSSIA
TURKS PRESENT DEMANDS TO FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND
ITALY FORCED OUT OF BALKANS

The moves:

RUSSIA (Reinsel): Fleet Gulf of Bothnia to Sweden. Fleet Rumania holds. Army Finland to Norway. Army St. Petersburg supports army Finland to Norway. Army Galicia to Bohemia. Army Trieste supports TURKISH army Serbia to Albania. Army Vienna supports army Trieste. Army Budapest supports army Trieste.

FRANCE (Thompson): Army Yorkshire to Liverpool. Fleet English Channel to London. Fleet Mid-Atlantic Ocean to English Channel. Army Belgium supports army Burgundy. Army Picardy supports army Belgium. Army Paris supports army Burgundy. Army Burgundy supports AUSTRIAN army Tyrolia to Munich.

TURKEY (Greene): Fleet Eastern Mediterranean to Ionian Sea. Fleet Greece supports fleet Eastern Mediterranean to Ionian Sea. Fleet Aegean Sea supports fleet Eastern Mediterranean to Ionian Sea. Army Serbia to Albania. Army Bulgaria supports fleet Greece.

GERMANY (Nelson): Fleet Helgoland Bight to North Sea. Fleet Denmark supports fleet Helgoland Bight to North Sea. Army Holland to Belgium. Army Ruhr supports army Holland to Belgium. Army Munich supports army Ruhr.

ITALY (Goldman): Army Albania to Trieste. Army Venice supports army Albania to Trieste. Fleet Adriatic supports army Albania to Trieste. Fleet Naples to Tyrrhenian Sea.

ENGLAND (Long): No moves received. Fleets Skagerrak and Sweden hold. Fleet Norway holds.

AUSTRIA (Duncan): No move received. Army Tyrolia holds.

The Italian army formerly in Albania is dislodged and having no available retreat is annihilated. The English Fleet in Norway is likewise annihilated as it received no orders on the dislodgment move.

BRODINGNAG is a journal of Postal Diplomacy. It reports the progress of games 1966AQ and 1966AV. It is sent Air Mail to active players in those games and, by surface mail, to players no longer active. Copies are sent to all Postal Diplomacy editors known to its editor. The price to others is ten cents per copy. The editor is John McCallum, Ralston, Alberta, Canada.

As a result of these moves the belligerent powers control the supply centres listed below:

RUSSIA: 4 home; Vienna, Budapest, Trieste, Rumania, Norway. (9)
May build 1.

FRANCE: 3 home, 2 Iberian, Belgium, London, Liverpool (8). May build 1.

TURKEY: 3 home, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia (6). No adjustment.

GERMANY: 3 home, Denmark, Holland. (5). No adjustment.

ITALY: 3 home, Tunis. (4). May build 1.

ENGLAND: Edinburgh, Sweden. (2). No adjustment.

AUSTRIA: None. Must remove remaining force.

Deadline for build orders is Saturday, 4 March 1967. Players may, if they wish, submit orders for Spring at the same time, making them conditional on the builds of the other powers.

PRESS RELEASES:

Paris, 1 Sept. France hopes to keep peace with Italy. Iberia and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean must always be French. Lyon, the Western Mediterranean, and North Africa should be unoccupied by major forces of any power.

Rome, 5 Sept. The government of Italy wishes to thank the government of France for its kind offers of assistance. The government of Italy will send further emissaries to discuss future actions of mutual interest.

Rome, 10 Sept. The government of Italy refuses to accept the Russian declaration of war as final. The government of Italy requests that the government of Russia confer with it about disputed matters before final, irrevocable steps are taken.

Sofia, 15 Sept. The Sultan stopped here on his journey to the front. He plans on stopping at Zara and Venice to see and adopt some of the Russian methods of occupation. When asked of his future plans he replied, "We plan to raise two armies and construct one additional defense squadron. Turkey and the Turkish people, however, will have reached their 'natural frontiers' upon our entry into the Vatican."

"Russia has been the power that has made our country what it is; we will not betray our friends. The Czar Reinsel has proven to be a man of his word, and I, the Sultan, shall prove that Turkey may also be honorable."

The Sultan went on to say, "Anyone who attacks Russia, attacks Turkey".

Geneva, 28 Sept. Diplomatic relations between Turkey and France are becoming strained, it seems. Turkey has asked Switzerland to look after Turkish interests in France. Acting in this capacity the Swiss Minister in Paris today handed le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères a note advising that the Turkish government would regard French fleets in the Western Mediterranean or in southern Spain as a sufficient cause for a declaration of war.

Geneva, 5 Oct. Turkey has sent the Swiss government a note stating that it would guarantee Swiss neutrality on condition that a Casino be opened here. This has caused considerable consternation in this staid city, the birthplace of Calvin, a native son whose influence is still very much in evidence. Casinos are felt to be more appropriate to minor principalities of the Cote d'azur than to Switzerland, a land whose reputation for financial probity and rectitude has made it the repository for many fortunes, private and not so private, belonging to citizens and government leaders of all the nations now at war. Financial houses, stung by what they regard as the insulting tone of the Turkish note, have suggested that the government should refrain, hereafter, from acting as the representative of Turkish interests in France. The government itself, more cautious, is reported to be privately advising the Turkish authorities of the unfavorable re-action to their note.

- - - - -

Game 1966AV

Fall 1903

The retreats for Fall 1903 were as follows:

RUSSIA (Zelazny): Fleet Constantinople to the south coast of Bulgaria.

AUSTRIA (Munroe): Army Venice retreats to Apulia.

ITALY (Francis): Fleet Ionian Sea retreats to Tunis.

FRANCE (Birsan): Army Marseilles retreats to Piedmont.

One player, as was his right, did not wish to submit an adjustment order until after he had seen the result of all the retreat moves. These retreats were accordingly sent to the players by carbon copy letter, dated 14 Feb. 1967 and a deadline of 28 Feb. 1967 was there set for build and removal orders. Several players have already sent in Spring moves on a conditional basis. All players are invited to do the same, if they wish, although, of course, this is not demanded.

- - - - -

The solution of the puzzle in the last issue is:

S M Y T H E
7 1 0 5 2 3

the other letters being:

N I W R
9 8 6 4

- - - - -

I have a number of interesting letters from Sgt. Wagner, Jared Johnson, Dave Francis, and others, which I had hoped to include. However, I have a train to catch in a few hours' time and they will have to be deferred until next issue. Please note that I will be away from Ralston for the next week, that is until the 26th or 27th of the month. Please do not make any phone calls during that period.

BROBDINGNAG Completed Game Rating List - #5.

Game #1965U, Barad-dur's Game B, has recently ended in that magazine. In the Barad-dur game mentioned last issue there was a draw between Banks Liebane and Rick Brooks. Apparently this game was intended to follow the same pattern as Don Miller's Turkey and Banks Liebane's Italy remained allied throughout the game and had close to equal strength in the latter stages of it. However, on the final move Don Miller surged ahead and grabbed a victory. There were no other survivors, other than the two mentioned.

This new win for Turkey puts that country still further in the lead in the country list. Liebane's good showing with Italy helps that country somewhat: it is still in the cellar but, at least, it is not alone there now. The new listing:

+18	John Smythe (W)	- 1	Jack Harness	
			Earl Thompson	
+ 9	Banks Liebane	- 2	Bob Adams	
	Derek Nelson (W)		Ron Daniels	
+ 8	Donald Miller (W)		James Dygert	
+ 7	Frank Clark		James Goldman	
+ 6	John Koning		Charles Reinsel	
	Bruce Pelz (W)		James Sanders	
	Charles Wells (W)	- 4	Clint Bigglestone	
+ 5	Rick Brooks		Margaret Gemignani	
	John McCallum (W)		Dave McDaniel	
+ 4	Eric Blake		Roland Tzudiker	
	John Boardman (W)	- 5	Tom Dulmer	
	Robert Lake		Jerald Jacks	
	James MacKenzie (W)		Stuart Keshner	
	Dian Pelz		Stephen Patt	
	Charles Turner (W)	- 6	Bernie Kling	
+ 3	Conrad von Netzke		Don Recklies	
+ 2	Mark Owings		Joel Sattel	
	Jock Root	-10	Charles Brannan	
	Gail Schow		Richard Schultz	
+ 1	Bill Christian	-12	Fred Lerner	
	Ken Davidson			
	Anders Swenson	-15	Paul Harley	
0	Len Bailes	Turkey	+30	70.8%
	Ron Bounds	England	+15	60.4
	Christina Cartier	France	- 1	49.9
	John Davey	Austria	- 5	46.5
	Ben Hendif	Russia	-11	42.4
	Alan Huff (W)	Germany	-14	40.3
		Italy	-14	40.3

Games: 1963A, B, 1964A, B, C, D,

1965A, E, I, L, T, U, 1966D, AP.

THE SELF STAND-OFF.

Let us suppose that we are playing France and that the Fall move is coming up. Brest is, at the moment, open, but there is an enemy fleet in the mid-Atlantic which may descend on it. We made a gain of a supply centre on the Spring move and expect to be able to hold that gain, so that we will have a build coming immediately after the current move. We would very much like to build a fleet in Brest to use against that marauding enemy fleet. How can we be sure of keeping Brest open and so making the desired build? For the sake of definiteness suppose that we have an army in each of Gascony and Paris.

If we could be sure that the enemy would attack Brest, then obviously we order one of the armies, say Paris, to Brest, a stand-off results, and the centre remains open for the build. However the enemy will likely foresee this, refrain from playing to Brest, our own force goes in and plugs the place, and we have to make our build elsewhere. The actual build is less useful to us than a fleet in Brest would have been. If we think that the enemy will stay out and, consequently, ourselves order nothing to Brest, we lose the centre if he does order his fleet in - not only will we get no build in Brest, we will get no build at all, as the loss of Brest will counter-balance our spring gain.

Something of a dilemma.

The thing to do in a case like this is to order both the Paris army and the Gascon one to Brest. They stand each other off and, at the same time, stand off any other non-supported force trying for Brest. Whatever the hostile force does, Brest remains open and available for the desired build.

Though usually used for keeping a supply centre open, the self-stand-off has other applications. For examples of effective use of this manoeuvre see the play of James Goldman in Game 1964C, the game completed about a half year ago in BROB.

There is nothing in the rulebook to suggest that the move is illegal; all gamesmasters, as far as I know, accept a self-stand-off set of moves. Why then do I mention this at all in a series devoted to discrepancies in the rulebook? The reason is that one club, the Scarborough Diplomacy Club, does, or did, outlaw the move. Their reasoning presumably is that it does not correspond with anything which occurs in the real world - no sane commander would order two of his units to attack one another. The Scarborough appears to be more emphatically in the "mimicry-of-life" camp than any other group of players; certainly its most prominent member is a strong upholder of that point of view. Since one organized group has opted for the deviant interpretation, there may be other individuals who hold similar views on the subject; so it appeared worth while to put the matter on record.

BROBDRIFGNAG allows the self-stand-off move. As far as I know, all other Diplomacy magazines do likewise.

The paragraphs above were written some months ago, shortly after the ambiguity lists were published in BROB #44. The two lists were arranged more or less in order of frequency and importance of the points, and I had intended to discuss them here in that order. "The Self Stand-off" has been published out of its proper order because two incidents have recently occurred which convince me that the manoeuvre is not as well known as I had thought.

1. Rod Walker, in Erewhon #7, in reply to a letter from Margaret Gemignani, and discussing how far a gamesmaster is justified in guessing the intent of a player, stated, "But, say you write A Par-Bur, A Mar-Bur. Now it is clear that one unit was intended to support the other." Now it is true that many orders are badly written, and that the player concerned in the above case may have intended one or other of his armies to support the other. However, that that interpretation is the true one is by no means "clear" to me. Had I received the pair of orders cited I would have assumed that the player meant precisely what he said, that he didn't want to move anything into Burgundy, but did want to prevent any other player from moving a force there, and that he was making the standard set of moves to achieve those two ends.

2. In High Liver #4, Richard Shagrin raises the question of the self stand-off move. He there gives a good description of one of its uses, but appears to think that it is something new. As can be seen from the main article, above, the self stand-off move has been around for a long time. There is an instance of it in the example at the back of the rulebook (Austria, Spring 1902). It was used at least once in the second game of Postal Diplomacy, 1963B, and it is still quite extensively used. Recent instances of the move that I have noticed, include Barad-dur #29, where Conrad von Netzke used it in game E, and Lonely Mountain #31, where Atkins used it in game 1965P. Many other cases could easily be found. Incidentally, there was nearly a case of this move in game 1966AV, the game that Shagrin is enrolled in, here in BROB, but the player concerned changed his mind and sent in a revised set of moves, shortly before the deadline.

The self stand-off is a well recognized manoeuvre, often used when a player wants, for whatever reason, to deny a space to an opponent, but does not want to enter that space himself. As far as I know it is allowed in all Postal Diplomacy journals; it certainly is allowed in BROB.

THE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE CONVOY

or, The Shagrin Double Convoy.

In the same issue of High Liver, #4, Richard Shagrin raises another question, one which I don't remember seeing discussed before. He there asks if it is legal to order Army London to Belgium, with both the fleet in the North Sea and the fleet in the English Channel ordered to make the convoy. The point of this is that, if one or the other fleet is dislodged by hostile attack, the army's move might still succeed as a result of the remaining fleet doing the convoying.

A reading of the paragraph on convoys in the rule book does not reveal anything that appears to prohibit the suggested measure. Nevertheless, I think that there are objections to Shagrin's proposal.

First, the "realist" objection. As Diplomacy players, we are used to being supreme commanders who issue grand orders like "Army London to Belgium". In real life such orders would be worked over by adjutants and staffs and, by the time they reached the units involved, they would be much more detailed than that. They would specify that the units concerned should entrain for Harwich, there embark and so proceed to Belgium via the North Sea; or alternatively, that they should

proceed to the Channel ports for transport to Belgium across the Channel. The same units could not be ordered to do both these things simultaneously. So if we regard our simple orders as short hand for the orders that would be actually issued, then the suggested order to travel by either of two alternative routes must fail.

Of course, in real life different parts of an army could be ordered to move by different routes. Part of it might then be able to carry out its movement, and the other part be prevented from doing so as a result of enemy action. But the game of Diplomacy knows nothing of half armies. The army involved makes the move or it doesn't - there can be no case of 2 divisions of it in Ostend and another 2 still in Dover.

There is another, a "legalist", objection to the proposal. Notice that the set of orders,

ENGLAND: Army Edinburgh to Brest

Fleet North Sea convoy army Edinburgh to Brest

Fleet English Channel convoy army Edinburgh to Brest is perfectly legal. This is an order for a convoy chain, to carry the army from Edinburgh, through the North Sea, then through the Channel, and so to Brest. The way it is written, above, is, moreover, the usual way of writing the convoy chain order.

So,

ENGLAND: Army London to Belgium

Fleet North Sea convoy army London to Belgium

Fleet English Channel convoy army London to Belgium

would normally mean, unless there is some indication to the contrary, that the army in London is to proceed to Belgium by convoy chain, through both the North Sea and the Channel. It is, of course, perfectly legal, although senseless, to order an army from London to Belgium by such a 2-link chain. So, it seems to me, the orders suggested by Shagrin, and given at the beginning of this paragraph, should be interpreted as an order for a convoy chain, since it is the normal way of ordering a convoy chain. We note, too, that such a chain, far from having more chance of succeeding than a convoy by one fleet or the other, actually has less. If any link of a convoy chain is broken, the chain as a whole is broken. So that the set of moves above would not succeed if either fleet is dislodged.

In BRODINGWAG alternate route convoy orders are not allowed. If a set of moves, such as that given at the beginning of the previous paragraph, is received, it will be interpreted as an order to convoy the army through both bodies of water, and dislodgment of either fleet will result in failure of the move.

This difficulty could perhaps be avoided in a future edition of the rulebook by saying that all orders for an army to proceed by convoy should specify the route. This is very often done now, at least in unusual cases, although not required by the present rules. For instance, the player for England will write,

"Army London to Belgium (GERMAN Fleet North Sea will convoy)".

The phrase in brackets will be omitted from the published version of the moves; but the player includes it to make sure that that silly fellow, the gamesmaster, understands what is intended. (All gamesmasters, of course, are idiots. If they weren't, why would they undertake such a thankless and arduous task?) To make the inclusion of the route a requirement for a convoy order would preclude the move which Shagrin has suggested.

Recently there has been much discussion of minor, niggling, points of the rules; a fair share of it a bearing in this magazine. The Alternate Route Convoy question, on the other hand, points out a real omission in the rulebook. I think it is the most important rule ambiguity unearthed in a long time. We owe Richard Shagrin our thanks for raising it.

- - - - -

The addresses of the magazines mentioned in the articles above are listed below:

Erewhon: Capt. R. C. Walker, FV3129356, TUSLOG Det. #183, APO, NYC, 09254

High Liver: Richard A. Shagrin, Room 356, Haggett Hall, University of Washington, Seattle, Wash., 98105.

Barad-dur, Jack Chalker, 5111 Liberty Heights, Baltimore, Md., 21207.

Lonely Mountain, Charles Wells, 3678 Lindholm Road, Cleveland, Ohio, 44120.

In particular you should see the issue of High Liver mentioned. The example which Shagrin gives for his alternate convoy move is rather more intricate than is suggested by the summary given above.

I would also like to invite Mr. Calhauer to give his views on the alternate route convoy move suggested by Shagrin. There is, of course, no need to ask Mr. Calhauer about the self stand-off as he has used the move on several occasions in print.

- - - - -